

REQUEST FOR INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR THE EPA REGION 6 STRATEGIC AGRICULTURAL PESTICIDE INITIATIVE PROGRAM

SUMMARY: EPA Region 6 is soliciting initial proposals for the Strategic Agricultural Pesticide Initiative Program. The goal and focus of the Program is to demonstrate and facilitate the adoption of pest management decisions and practices that will provide growers with a "reasonable transition" away from high-risk pesticides. Approximately \$100,000 in grant/cooperative agreement funds is available for the program under Section 20 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act as amended, for research, public education, training, monitoring, demonstrations, and studies.

DATES: In order to be considered for funding during the fiscal year 2003 award cycle, all proposals must be received by EPA Region 6 on or before April 4, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Send proposals to: Eugene Thilsted, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue (6PD-P), Dallas, Texas 75202-2733. Proposals may also be sent by E-mail to thilsted.eugene@epa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eugene Thilsted at 214-665-2782 or E-mail at thilsted.eugene@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Request for Initial Proposals for the EPA Region 6 Strategic Agricultural Pesticide Initiative Program

EPA Region 6 is soliciting initial proposals for the Strategic Agricultural Pesticide Initiative Program. The goal and focus of the Program is to demonstrate and facilitate the adoption of pest management decisions and practices that will provide growers with a "reasonable transition" away from high-risk pesticides. Approximately \$100,000 in grant/cooperative agreement funds is available for the program under Section 20 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act as amended, (the Act), for research, public education, training, monitoring, demonstrations, and studies. EPA has delegated grant-making authority to the EPA Regional Offices. EPA Region 6 is responsible for the solicitation of interest, the screening of proposals, selection of projects, and awarding of funds.

II. Eligible Applicants

In accordance with the Act "... Federal agencies, universities, or others as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the act, ..." are eligible to receive a grant. Eligible applicants for purposes of funding under this solicitation include those operating within the five EPA Region 6 states (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas), any agency or instrumentality of a Region 6 State including State universities and non-profit organizations operating within a Region 6 State.

III. Activities and Criteria

A. General

The goal and focus of the Strategic Agricultural Pesticide Initiative Program is to demonstrate and facilitate the adoption of pest management decisions and practices that will provide growers with a “reasonable transition” away from high risk pesticides.

The project period for proposals is two years. There is no set number of individual awards. Individual awards may not exceed the amount of funds available. Applications for supplemental awards of existing projects are eligible for consideration. While cost sharing is encouraged, it is not required. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals or applications and make no awards.

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a Region 6 panel using the criteria listed below. Following evaluation the panel will select proposals for further funding consideration. Applicants will be notified in writing of the panel decisions. EPA will invite only applicants whose initial proposals are selected to submit detailed final proposals and a formal application for federal assistance (Standard Form 424). The application form can be found on the internet at www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6md/grants.htm. Application forms can be requested from the EPA contact and address listed above. Applications will be subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.

Organizations awarded funding will be expected to follow EPA’s uniform administrative requirements for grants, agreements and cooperative agreements. For institutions of higher education, hospitals and other non-profit organizations these requirements are found in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 30. For state and local governments these requirements are found in 40 CFR 31. Should disputes arise after the federal award, the appropriate dispute resolution process will be followed. These processes are found in 40 CFR 30.36 and 40 CFR 31.70.

B. Proposal Format and Content

The proposal should contain the following information, with a maximum of five (5) one sided pages:

1. Title.
2. Summary.
3. Objectives.
4. Budget.

C. Submission of Proposals

Initial Proposals should be submitted to: Eugene Thilsted, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue (6PD-P), Dallas, Texas 75202-2733. In order to be considered for funding during the fiscal year 2003 award cycle, all proposals must be received on or before

April 4, 2003. Once the initial proposal is approved for further funding consideration, applicants will be notified to submit a formal application. For further information contact: Eugene Thilsted

at
214-665-2782 or E-mail at thilsted.eugene@epa.gov.

Applicants should clearly mark information they consider confidential. EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency regulations at 40 CFR 2, Subpart B.

D. Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Relevance of project to the initiative. (40%)
2. Innovation of project to accomplish stated goals. (30%)
3. Likelihood the project can be replicated to benefit other communities or the product may have broad utility to a widespread audience. (30%)

E. Quality System Requirements

If the initial proposal includes any activity that involves the use of environmentally related measurements and related decisions, applicants must have an EPA approved Quality Management Plan (QMP) in order to receive funding. The QMP describes the organization's quality system in terms of the organizational structure, functional responsibilities of management and staff, lines of authority, and required interfaces for those planning, implementing, documenting, and assessing all activities conducted. If the project involves sampling or data collection, a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) will be required.

IV. Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance

The Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance number and title assigned to this program is 66.716, Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Demonstrations, and Special Purpose Projects within the Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances.